

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPULSORY ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS WITH
HOTS ACTIVITIES IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN MANOKWARI,
WEST PAPUA**



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Universitas Papua

2023

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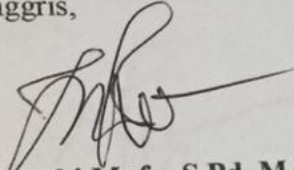
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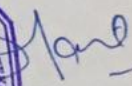

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BACKGROUND

Teaching English in Papua has its own uniqueness; the diverse linguistic background specifically is on top among other challenges, not to mention the school circumstances that are most likely lack of many school elements such as language and science laboratory, library or school counseling program. While schools are pushed to thrive in their quality through the application of HOTS in each level of high schools, it cannot be denied that students in Papua are still struggling with many other obstacles including school facility, appropriate learning media as well as their English proficiency.

According to K13, teacher and learning process are students-centered, means teacher will not be in one-man-show mode. Students are expected to be more engaged in the learning process and, thus, their HOTS is expected to be unconsciously developed. In this scenario, teachers are playing the role of facilitator. However, the situation in most schools in West Papua is still far from ideal. Students are still in passive mode, English is still a huge battle for them and, hence, being able to think critically is still hard to obtain.

According to Ur (1996) on textbook criteria, there are eighteen components need to be considered when deciding the quality of a textbook ranging from the objectives of the textbook, clear instruction to the textbooks' availability. Even though the objectives of this study is not to investigate the content of a textbook, the list of criteria are very helpful to help the researcher to maintain the objectivity of the study. English textbook from Intan Pariwara is expected to help students to excel in English subject. The book is completed with QR codes that should be very helpful for individual practice. The books are also claimed to already apply HOTS in the activities to improve students' cognitive skills. The wide use of these books in Manokwari has raised a question : Does it meet the right audience in Manokwari? Do students in Manokwari are able to follow this book? What do the teachers' opinion about it? What other choices do they have?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Textbook is one important element of teaching and learning. As stated by Richard (2011), textbook is considered as the main learning reference in class, it is mostly seen as the main source of the knowledge. In addition, Richard (2019) also points out that for learners, the textbook may provide the major source of contact they have with the language apart from input provided by the teacher. It cannot be avoided that even for communication purpose in English class, the teacher will solemnly use the textbook; the role play exercises in textbooks usually presented by students with little to no improvisation, merely to avoid making mistakes. Febriyani et.al (2020) claims that most teachers “were unaware of the mindset of K13 program, which was supposed to build students’ higher thinking skills”. Then what makes a good textbook? There are many theories about it; Mukundan (2011) emphasizes to the “validity, reliability or practicality problems”, Suryani (2018) it should be “covering objective, language skills, content, and design”, Byrd (2001) claims that there should be “the fit between the material and the curriculum” which was elaborated by Dharma et. al (2018) that the textbook should “integrated all the four skill in English as well, integrated two main language components required in English, integrated the process of scientific approach, and inserted character values and cultural awareness to the students”.

The highlight of K13 is to shape and maintain students’ cognitive development, creative and critical thinking and problem solving. All these three elements are believed to be what Indonesian’s students are lacking in general. Therefore, HOTS are seen to be one of the solutions inserted in K13 program. HOTS stands for Higher Order Thinking Skills is literally a hot issue among TESOLers in Indonesia these days. The idea of K13 program to build students’ critical and creative thinking has been around with all the challenges following. HOTS as mentioned in Kurniawati (2018) is defined as “the ability to think that is not merely concerned with remembering (recalling), restating, or referring without processing (reciting)” while in fact, that is how students are taught. It is not a secret that students are comfortable

being dictated by the teachers and tend to be scared with the idea of having their own opinion.

According to Bloom's taxonomy, HOTS is classified into the skills of analyzing, evaluating, and creating; analyzing is understanding how an object is arranged according its function or purposes, evaluation is using certain knowledge to judge an object based on its actual practices, and creating is constructing an object as a whole functional new concept. In other words, HOTS is a relevant mode to shape students' way of thinking into a more deductive reasoning. However, creating a conducive students-centered learning environment for students in one thing and preparing teacher to be able to tackle the progressive and continual changes in another thing. In line with this, Malahayati et.al (2020) affirms that teachers' experience and knowledge are not yet ready for creating HOTS tests. Specifically, in Manokwari, while the demand is high, the trainings and workshops from English teacher is very limited, even before the pandemic. Therefore, it is very important to have a fair knowledge about the teachers' readiness to implement HOTS when implementing K13 program in their daily teaching activities.

The textbooks consist of concept map, activities, grammar highlight, self-reflection and summary mapping. These are purposively arranged to help shaping students' thinking when working on activities in every unit. Concept map is to give students the information of the topic, it also to check students' background knowledge about the topic. It is then followed by the activities and grammar highlight as the main grammar discussion. At the end of the unit, there are self-reflection which ask students to reflect what they have learned and also summary mapping to ensure students understand everything discussed in the unit.

This study aims to investigate the actual use of Intan Pariwara "Bahasa Inggris" textbook series for class VII, class VIII and class IX for even semester. The activities for each book are categorized into LOTS and HOTS and later will be grouped into Bloom's category as analyzing (C4) evaluating (C5), and creating (C6). The data can be seen as follow;

Table 1. HOTS and LOTS distribution

No	Book	Total activities	LOTS	%	HOTS	%
1.	“Bahasa Inggris” Textbook for Class VII	134	108	80.6%	26	19.40%
2.	“Bahasa Inggris” Textbook for Class VIII	157	119	75.8%	38	24.20%
3.	“Bahasa Inggris” Textbook for Class IX	213	170	79.8%	43	20.19%

The instruction words for HOTS activities are identified and grouped as C4 (share, identify, provide and identify), C5 (criticize, explain, discuss, compare, and find the error) and C6 (make, create, present, decorate, and write sentences). Most HOTS instructions are in C4 level.

METHODOLOGY

The study used purposive sampling which mean the sample is chosen according to the objective of the study; the teachers that use the Bahasa Inggris textbooks from Intan Pariwara. The samples of this study are English teachers and students from 2 public junior high schools in Manokwari. The teachers involved in this study is Mr. Jaemin (name is pseudonym) and Mrs. Yoona (name is pseudonym). Mr. Jaemin has been teaching English for 6 years, while Mrs. Yoona has been teaching English for 12 years. Both graduated from Papua University, therefore, their knowledge about teaching EFL in Papuan setting is valid. The instrument of this study is questionnaires and interview. The questionnaire for the students used Likert scale and the interview was open ended to allow the teachers to give more insightful information. The interview was recorded with consent. For the students, the researcher used random sampling. The research is a descriptive qualitative study. According to Merriam (1998) this type of research results in an in-depth report from individual experience.

FINDING & DISCUSSION

Interview with the teachers were done separately. The researcher also visited the teachers in their schools for casual observation, this was done to build and maintain professional relationship between the researcher and the teachers as well as to show mannerism. Both teachers were very helpful during data collection, especially with spreading questionnaires to the students.

Teacher's Perceptions

This session will be divided into teachers' knowledge of the book, teachers' knowledge of HOTS and teachers' opinion of the textbooks; Mrs. Yoona and Mr. Jaemin. Both teachers are from different public schools yet share the same level in junior high school. From the interview with the teachers, primarily, it can be seen that the textbooks are used as complementary, not the main one. The reason is because Ministry of Education releases complementary English text book entitled "When A Ring Bells". However, these books are rarely involved in class as they are not equipped with challenging exercises for students. The compulsory textbook mostly contains explanation of the topics, with very limited exercises. This leaves teachers with challenges to provide students with proper exercises from different textbook sources. Therefore, "Bahasa Inggris" textbooks from Intan Pariwara are regarded are the perfect solutions for it has been acknowledged as the experienced school textbook publisher in Indonesia. In addition, it seems like the textbooks are the only available complementary textbook option in Manokwari.

- **Teachers' Knowledge of the Textbook Content**

As explained above, the textbooks consist of concept map, activities, grammar highlight. These five elements are designed to help student exploring the topic of the unit more effectively and consistently. Below is the number of activities in each level of textbook.

Table 2. The number of units and activities in the textbooks

No	Textbook	Total Units	Unit/Activities
1.	“Bahasa Inggris” for Class VII	4	1 (38), 2 (39), 3 (33), 4 (24)
2.	“Bahasa Inggris” for Class VIII	7	1 (23), 2 (19), 3 (22), 4 (20), 5 (25), 6 (28), 7 (18)
3.	“Bahasa Inggris” for Class IX	11	1 (20), 2 (19), 3 (16), 4 (18), 5 (23), 6 (24), 7 (17), 8 (20), 9 (19), 10 (21), 11 (16)

In general, it is safe to say that all teachers are familiar with this publisher both as a teacher of a students. This textbook has been around in Manokwari alone for more than twenty years. Specifically, as this book claimed to have provided HOTS activities, teachers are investigated if they are aware of this information. The result is interesting; teachers are well aware of the HOTS contents as they are displayed on the textbook cover. However, the teachers do not precisely perceive the amount of HOTS activities provided. This can be understood because the teachers’ main focus is to make sure that the students enjoy the class in the first place; a little complication will make the students anxious. Furthermore, there are approximately 20 activities per unit in each textbook and both teachers agree that it is rather burdensome for students to finish all the activities within the assigned class hours.

“We only use two or three activities per unit as we are limited by the time. Also, we only choose the LOTS activities as it is simpler to execute.” (Mrs. Yoona)

Aligned with Mrs. Yoona, Mr. Jaemin also said that his students are not entirely ready for HOTS activities in the textbooks. Not willing to burden the students, they both figured out that giving LOTS activities is the for the best. They also share the same idea about choosing LOTS activities as the exercise formats are easier to do, for example, simple instruction such as fill in the blank, match the words, answer the

questions according to the text. These types of exercise formats are more familiar among students.

“My students usually take a lot of time to finish a new type of exercise format. It is time-consuming when we are very limited by time.” (Mr. Jaemin)

This strongly related to students’ language ability in general. Asking students to do type of questions that are above their level of proficiency might require more time, which is definitely impossible to do during allocated school hours, which are around three to four school hours per week, which equals to 120 to 160 minutes every week. Students might need extra lesson and time to move toward this new concept of questions, but it is absolutely doable and possible. Nonetheless, this treatment is impractical as it might have need teachers’ more efforts in terms of the extra teaching time and the follow up accompaniment.

Realizing the importance of HOTS exercise, Mrs. Yoona claimed to have started to introduce HOTS exercise to her students. She has developed her own HOTS activities with certain theme that she believed was closer to her students’ experiences. This way, students will feel less anxious when adjusting to more difficult type of exercise. As she did the activities mostly in verbal practice, she involved scaffolding technique.

Additionally, regarding to the textbook highlight of using QR scan, the teachers never use the special feature in class due to low internet connection. However, the teachers always encourage students to access the online exercises even when it is only complementary. Another reason is considering students’ family financial status, not every student has proper smartphone to access the online exercises. In terms of self-reflection, teachers always check students’ understanding at the end of the class by asking students to tell what they have, instead of asking them to write what they have learned.

“I love interacting with my students. Making sure they understand what we have learned by telling what they have learned is more satisfying. I also can help if there is anything they missed during the class.” (Mrs. Yoona)

“Some of my students are very shy. Sometimes I do not know whether they understand or not so I have to be more active and creative checking their understanding by asking them in a fun way.” (Mr. Jaemin)

Although the textbooks suggest the students to express their experience and understanding in written expression, the students’ English proficiency level in both high schools mostly are too low to do any written exercise. Both teachers agree that most of their students are not ready, yet they also still encourage the students to practice their writing skill. One problem with the writing exercise is that there is no writing rubric provided to help the teacher with the grading.

For vocabulary building, teachers provide vocabulary at the beginning of the topic, usually before reading sessions. During the reading, teachers actively bring the vocabulary to students’ mind by repeating and drilling the vocabulary. This traditional teaching method is said to always successful to engage students’ attention in classroom. It is obvious because the level of the students’ English proficiency is relatively low so it is safe to provide them vocabulary from the theme that they will use in class, beforehand.

Teachers’ knowledge of HOTS

As we discussed, the teachers’ background knowledge of HOTS was also addressed. Since HOTS is the highlight of K13, teachers are aware of this demand in guiding students’ analytical and critical thinking through HOTS exercises. However, the lack of training for teachers make it rather challenging to implement. Not all teachers are not confident about their understanding of HOTS concept or whether they have done it properly.

“We rather stuck in C1, C2 and C3 because they are at the level where our students are. Whether we realize or not, it becomes harder to level up, especially during this pandemic situation” (Mr. Jaemin)

“We actually understand the demands to provide HOTS and we have tried to insert it in our classes. Some students can adjust and improve, some still struggle. Although we are excited about the strong ones’ progress, we also to focus on the weak, too.”(Mrs. Yoona)

Teachers are facing dilemma when implementing HOTS, not only from the textbooks but also during in-class activities. When they tried to stimulate HOTS activities, students’ reactions showed that they are rather overwhelmed. For example, when assigned to take turns asking their friends about their daily activity, students only ask according to the template and were not able to make conclusion accordingly. This shall not happen when students have more time to practice in a more comfortable classroom atmosphere.

Speaking about teachers’ knowledge and experience of HOTS, despite the lack of training from the schools and government, both teachers show a great understanding about HOTS; the differences among each category, the signature codes of each category when implementing in exercises, as well as the teachers’ ability to create HOTS questions. It might not fair and appropriate to question teachers’ competences, yet, these teachers have demonstrated their knowledge through a non-formal discussion with the writer. Therefore, it is very unfortunate that teachers’ need to get appropriate training through workshops seems to be ignored by the responsible parties in the government body.

Teachers' Opinion of the Textbook

Both teachers agree that the textbook offers great methods to study English for their level. Each unit has unique and modern topic to discuss. All of the topics are relevant to the fast-changing modern world. However, there are limitation of why they can achieve dealing with limited time, students' proficiency and experience, and also students' economic status.

They also admit that HOTS activities in the textbook, as a matter of fact, are designed to build up students' critical thinking. However, as it has been understood, students in eastern part of Indonesia are a normally having a hard time to deal with analyzing and evaluating types of questions. In other words, HOTS questions are still hard for the students. Therefore, it is most likely the same situation with students in other parts of Papua island; students are still struggling with HOTS question, even when the questions are delivered in Bahasa Indonesia. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the HOTS questions are impossible to be done. The teachers agree that their students might feel overwhelmed at the beginning but they seem to be able to keep up with the HOTS activities, with intensive guidance from the teachers. The problems lie in time limitation and teaching and learning support from the schools.

Students' Perception

In this section, students were given a questionnaire about the use of the textbook. The students participated were randomly chosen from the high schools, thus the results were objective. Thirty-seven selected students from 2 high schools responded to the questionnaires and they seem to generally have a positive perception toward the textbook. However, it is interesting that when asked whether they like the book, the distribution of those who like the textbook and neutral is even.

Table 3. Students perception
of the textbook

No	Indicator	Mean
1.	The content of the book is hard to understand.	2.94
2.	Teacher discussing the task in classroom.	4.13
3.	Students doing the group work assignment.	3.27
4.	The book makes me more confident in English class.	3.97
5.	I use the barcode to access the web-link.	2.97
6.	I get new vocabulary from the book.	3.48
7.	I do the reflection section at the end of every unit.	3.59
8.	My parents are helping me doing the task.	2.89
9.	I understand the topic from every unit.	2.83
10.	My short impression using the book	3.97

The level of difficulties of the book is apparently high as seen in indicator 1, where 13 students agree that the book is hard to understand and 18 others are not sure about it. It strongly relates to in indicator 9 which only 10 students are confident that they understand the topic in each unit while the rest are still struggling. It is also interesting that the distribution of students in indicator 5 is rather even, which indicates that students are quite independent learners because the teachers do not obligate them to access the link due to the weak Internet connection in Manokwari.

From indicator 1, it is plain to see that students are generally struggling with the textbooks. It is mostly related to the vocabulary and the themes presented in the textbooks; for example, students in Manokwari are not yet familiar with watching and creating vlog or video blog. This internet culture might be a popular trend in bigger cities; not with students in Papua in general.

“Our students mostly are from low to middle-class families, therefore they might not be familiar with certain considerably fancy activities such as traveling with planes or even creating video blog. Therefore, this is understandable that they find the exercise even more confusing.” (Mr. Jaemin)

It is safe to say that there might be some students who are aware of this vlogging culture, but certainly not the majority. Therefore, when students are given the vlogging theme, they were overwhelmed. It is certainly acceptable that introducing new topic is an inseparable part of learning, it is also understandable that students might take their time to digest new concept that they are introduced to. In the end, students still find the textbooks useful as they always learn newer common knowledge and experience.

From indicator 5, the barcode provided as the highlight of the textbooks is unfortunately rarely used by the students. As mentioned, the Internet connection is one of the biggest challenges in Papua setting in general. It is such a loss that what supposed to be the strength of the textbook cannot be used properly. Although students agree that the online exercise is very helpful, it is still impractical to use, not to mention very burdensome to many students.

CONCLUSION

All in all, the textbooks are used as a complementary one. Although the highlighted purpose of the textbooks is for students to practice HOTS, the number of HOTS activities is very few comparing to LOTS activities. In addition, teachers only assign LOTS 2-3 activities per unit for the students, considering students low level of English proficiency. The challenges are complex from teachers' readiness, time limitation, to students' diverse proficiency background. Teachers suggest regular trainings held for teachers regarding constructing HOTS activities. In one hand, teachers are challenged to explore and develop their experience using HOTS activities from the textbooks. On the other hand, generally, students seem to have a pleasant experience with the textbooks.

Despite both engaging and overwhelming experience that students have had with the textbooks, the writer believe that the textbooks has given a fresh knowledge for students in Manokwari. There is many prevailing information that are definitely

essential for both students and teacher. Furthermore, there are too many activities for each unit that is not used in class due to the limited time allocation. I believe the publisher should take into account the total of activities in the textbooks considering the time allocation suggested in the curriculum. Lastly, there are a writing section at the end of each unit aimed to see how well students keep up with the materials; there should be a writing rubric to guide students to see their level of writing ability. It will be a great help for both students and teachers. To sum up, the textbooks might have a great success in more advanced schools setting, but not here in Manokwari, not yet.

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